

IV are necessarily obtained through the process of the elected group. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Groups I-IV all relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 by sharing the same special technical features. Accordingly, all claims should be examined together.

In addition, the Examiner has the discretion to prosecute all of the pending claims in a single patent application. In fact, “[I]f the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.” (Emphasis added; Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, § 803, second paragraph).

Thus, for reasons of efficiency in prosecution and searching, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the present restriction requirement.

**B. REJOINDER**

Applicant reserves the right to request rejoinder of all appropriate claims removed by the Examiner in the event that the traversal is not found to be persuasive.

**C. FEES**

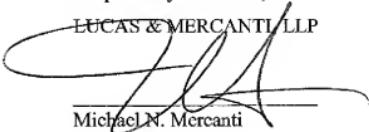
This response is being filed within the shortened period for response. Thus, no further fees are believed to be required. If, on the other hand, it is determined that any further fees are due or any overpayment has been made, the Assistant Commissioner is hereby authorized to debit or credit such sum to Deposit Account No. 02-2275.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a)(3), please treat this and any concurrent or future reply in this application that requires a petition for an extension of time for its timely submission as incorporating a petition for extension of time for the appropriate length of time. The fee associated therewith is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-2275.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

LUCAS & MERCANTI LLP



Michael N. Mercanti  
Reg. No. 33,966

LUCAS & MERCANTI, LLP  
475 Park Avenue South  
New York, New York 10016  
Phone: 212-661-8000  
Fax: 212-661-8002

**CERTIFICATE**

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LUCAS & MERCANTI, LLP

BY:



Elizabeth Lee